C. JESUS GOES PUBLIC. MARK 1:14-20

What is "the gospel"? Mark tells us quite clearly very early on: the Good News that Jesus is bringing is, "The right time has come. The Kingdom of God is near." Mark talks about "the Kingdom of God"; Matthew calls it "the Kingdom of Heaven". The Jews cherished the hope that one day God would act visibly to set up His kingly rule. The annunciation of its coming was therefore truly a piece of good news: "How wonderful it is to see a messenger coming across the mountains, bringing good news, the news of peace! He announces victory and says to Zion, 'Your God is king!'" (*Isaiah* 52:7) The message now was that the time of waiting and expectation had ended and the Kingdom of God had drawn near as predicted by the prophets: "Then the one who had been living for ever came and pronounced judgment in favour of the people of the Supreme God. The time had arrived for God's people to receive royal power." (*Daniel* 7:22)

The Good News of the Kingdom, in the understanding of Mark, is not just something that Jesus announces; he brings it into being by his actions. The Kingdom means God coming to the world and arranging things according to how He wants them, not how Satan wants them. The process which Christ began is still being worked out: this is why Christians pray in the Lord's

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